

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 06905 021216Z

45

ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 USIE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 NSCE-00

SSO-00 IO-10 /044 W

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O 021155Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4587

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6905

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: FY-75 IV GRANTEE IMAM MUSA AL SADR

1. LAST NIGHT DR. CHARLES MALIK CALLED ME AT HOME TO SAY HE HAD JUST HAD TWO HOURS WITH THE IMAM AND ONE OF THE MATTERS DISCUSSED WAS HIS POSTPONING HIS TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES. MALIK SAID THAT THE IMAM TOLD HIM PREMIER DESIGNATE RASHID KARAME AND YASSER ARAFAT HAD BOTH ASKED HIM TO POSTPONE THE TRIP. MALIK INQUIRED IF THIS WOULD RESULT IN ANY REAL PROBLEMS. I TOLD HIM I DID NOT THINK SO BUT THAT MEETINGS HAD BEEN SOUGHT WITH AMERICAN DIGNITARIES, INCLUDING THE VICE PRESIDENT. MALIK SAID THAT IF WE CARED TO, VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE COULD BE INFORMED THAT HE, MALIK, HOPES IMAM'S TRIP WOULD NOT OCCUR AT THIS TIME.

2. THIS MORNING AT 1130 I CALLED ON IMAM. BEFORE DOING SO, I SPOKE TO PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR BOUTROS DIB AND SUNNI LEADER SAEB SALAAM AND ASKED THEM WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF THE IMAM'S LEAVING. THEY BOTH REPLIED IT WAS HIGHLY DESIRABLE HE REMAIN BEIRUT AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE.

3. IMAM WAS EXTREMELY APOLOGETIC, REALIZING HOW OFTEN HIS TRIP HAD BEEN POSTPONED IN THE PAST. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAS BEEN EXPENDING EVERY EFFORT TO COUNTERACT WITH ARAFAT, JUMBLATT'S BAD LEFTIST INFLUENCES. HE HAS ALSO BEEN CONCERNED RE HABASH JUBRIL AND OTHER IMMODERATE INFLUENCES ON ARAFAT AND BELIEVES THAT HE IS AMONG THE HANDFUL THAT MIGHT ACT AS A COUNTER WEIGHT.

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4. I DID NOT TRY TO DISSUADE IMAM. IMAM RELIEVED AND THEN SPOKE
AT GREAT LENGTH OF HIS REGRET AT POSTPONING HIS SCHEDULE. HE
OFFERED TO FIX NEW DATE AND INQUIRED WHETHER I THOUGHT IT SHOULD
BE JULY, AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER. I TOLD HIM I THOUGHT SEPTEMBER
BEST WHEN ACADEMICIANS WERE AVAILABLE AND SUMMER VACATIONS FINISHED.
ALSO I TOLD HIM WEATHER WOULD BE BETTER AND I THOUGHT WE
SHOULD BE CERTAIN THAT LEBANESE SCENE ONCE AGAIN STABILIZED.
IT IS BOTH IN U.S. AND LEBANESE INTERESTS THAT IMAM NOT RPT NOT
ABSENT HIMSELF FROM THE CURRENT LEBANESE SCENE.
GODLEY

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